

Con Brio

**Sunday October 4, 2015
Koerner Hall**

**ESPRIT
ORCHESTRA**

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& Conductor**

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WELCOME TO THE FIRST CONCERT OF OUR 33rd SEASON!

CON BRIO

As we launch Esprit Orchestra's 33rd season with tonight's concert, I'm deeply grateful to the many individuals, corporations, foundations and arts councils that contribute funds in recognition of Esprit as a valued cultural asset. Our track record of excellence, engagement and innovation cannot be sustained without their contributions.

I also want to draw attention to Esprit's most precious resource – **our musicians**. Esprit's special accomplishments are achieved through their enormous talents, dedication to and belief in bringing new works to the stage. They are also central to the success we have in our mentoring and education programs, recordings, tours, media and cross-disciplinary projects.

With this in mind, Esprit is initiating a **Sponsor-a-Player** program that highlights our musicians' achievements and connects them with you as special patrons.

The goal of the program is to allow our loyal supporters and philanthropists the chance to get to know the Esprit family – musicians, staff and Board members – in a more informal and intimate setting than the concert hall.

Please see details of our plan on **page 9** of this program booklet. I urge you to give this program your consideration so you can take advantage of its benefits to you as a member of a very special group of donors.

Your participation will have a significant impact on the exciting development of Esprit and shine a bright light on Esprit's most precious resource.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Alex Pauk".

Alex Pauk, C.M.
Founding Music Director and Conductor

CON BRIO

Alex Pauk, Music Director and Conductor

7:15 pm

Pre-Concert Talk

Composer Omar Daniel and Percussionist Mark Duggan

Hosted by Alexina Louie

8:00 pm

Concert

PROGRAMME

Zosha Di Castri

Lineage (2013)

Thomas Adès

***Dances from Powder Her Face** (2007)**

(England)

I. Overture

II Waltz

III. *Finale*

INTERMISSION

Omar Daniel

Sinfonia Concertante** (2015) (World Premiere)

(Canada)

Mehetapja Meeli Unistus

(The Husband Killer's Dream)

Jörg Widmann

***Con Brio* (2008)**

(Germany)

*Performance generously supported with funding from the Koerner Foundation

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ESPRIT ORCHESTRA

Alex Pauk, Music Director and Conductor

Violin I

Stephen Sitarski,
*Concertmaster**
Parmela Attariwala
Corey Gemmel
Anne Armstrong
Joanna Zabrowarna
Elizabeth Johnston
Jayne Maddison
Sonia Vizante

Violin II

Bethany Bergman
Hiroko Kagawa
Michael Sproule
Janet Horne
Kate Unrau
Laurel Mascarenhas
Xiao Grabke
Kenin McKay

Viola

Douglas Perry
Rhyll Peel
Kathy Rapoport
Nicholaos Papadakis
Anthony Rapoport
Mary McGeer

Cello

Paul Widner
Marianne Pack
Olga Laktionova
Elaine Thompson
Margaret Gay
Peter Cosbey

Bass

Tom Hazlitt
Hans Preuss
Rob Wolanski
Natalie Kemerer

Flute

Douglas Stewart, *piccolo**
Maria Pelletier, *piccolo*
Tristan Durie

Oboe

Lesley Young*
Karen Rotenberg, *english*
horn
Jasper Hitchcock

Clarinet

Colleen Cook
Richard Thomson, *bass*
clarinet
Michele Verheul, *E flat*
clarinet

Bassoon

Lisa Chisholm
William Cannaway,
contrabassoon
Jerry Robinson

Horn

Bardhyl Gjevori
Diane Doig
Christine Passmore
Linda Bronicheski

Trumpet

Michael Fedyshyn
Anita McAlister
Brenda Cassin

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9 of this program
for more
information.

Trombone

David Archer
David Pell
Herb Poole, *bass trombone*

Tuba

Scott Irvine

Piano

Stephen Clarke
Ben Smith, *celeste*

Harp

Erica Goodman

Percussion

Ryan Scott
Mark Duggan
Trevor Tureski
Blair Mackay
Daniel Morphy

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ALEX PAUK

Music Director, Conductor and Composer

Alex Pauk was inducted into the Order of Canada on September 23rd, 2015. As a composer, conductor and educator, he revitalized orchestral life for composers across Canada in 1983 by founding Esprit Orchestra as Canada's only orchestra devoted to new music. Esprit, with a core of 65 top instrumentalists, Canada's best soloists, and an annual subscription series in Toronto, encourages composers to take bold new directions. Through building and sustaining Esprit's high calibre performances, commissioning programme, innovative programming (80% Canadian), recordings, performing arts videos and DVDs, outreach projects, tours, and interdisciplinary arts and media ventures, Pauk has been a leader in developing and promoting Canadian music at home and abroad.

As a conductor he attains excellent performances on stage and in recordings. His innovative programming and commitment to the community through Esprit have garnered SOCAN and Chalmers Awards as well as three Lieutenant Governor's Arts Awards. He was named *Musician of the Year* (1999) by peers at the Toronto Musicians' Association, was a recipient of Canada Council for the Arts Molson Prize (2007) and has helped many composers advance their careers through commissions, high profile performances, recordings and broadcasts. Pauk's commissioning, of Canadian composers of all ages and stylistic trends, is central to his work. He has been a leader in taking new music out of the concert hall and to people in their communities. Under Pauk's direction, Esprit was awarded the 2005 Vida Peene Award for excellent standards of performance and innovative programming.

Alex Pauk has a very wide range of experience as a composer with works for every kind of performing ensemble, the theatre as well as dance companies. Revealing this depth of experience, his most notable compositions include: *Touch Piece*, a multimedia work for full orchestra, 16 channel surround sound with digital sound track, sounds of nature and altered orchestral sound projected from loudspeakers, multi-screen video environment and fabric sculptures with special theatrical lighting; *Farewell to Heaven*, a full length work for the Menaka Thakkar Indian Dance Company; and three works involving important Canadian virtuosos: *Concerto for Harp and Orchestra*, *Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra*, *Flute Quintet*, and *Musique immergées* for chamber orchestra and audio playback.

He is presently composing a work for flute orchestra for performance with New Music Concerts as well as *Soul and Psyche* for choir and orchestra to be performed by Esprit Orchestra and the Elmer Iseler Singers in March 2016.

STEPHEN SITARSKI

Concertmaster

Stephen SitarSKI enjoys a varied career as a violinist and musician. He is Concertmaster of the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, holds the same position with Esprit Orchestra, and held the same position with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony (KWS) for 15 seasons (1997 – 2012). During his tenure in K-W, Mr. SitarSKI became Artistic Director of the KWS Baroque and Beyond. Stephen has also been guest concertmaster across Canada and the United States, working with many distinguished conductors including Mstislav Rostropovich, Philippe Entremont, Raymond Leppard, Bramwell Tovey, and James Judd. He has served as Associate Concertmaster of the Canadian Opera Company Orchestra, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, and was guest concertmaster and featured soloist with the National Ballet Orchestra for *Eugene Onegin* and *Russian Seasons* in March 2011.

Stephen frequently appears as soloist with many concertos in the standard repertoire as well as concertos written especially for him by Canadian composers such as Kelly-Marie Murphy (*Blood Upon the Body, Ice Upon the Soul*, 2006 premiere with Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony) and Glenn Buhr (Violin Concerto, 2000 premiere with Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony). Stephen is a founding member of Trio Laurier, formed in 2007 with cellist Paul Pulford and pianist Leslie De'Ath, and is a regular participant in diverse chamber groups and festival events nationally and internationally with many of Canada's finest musicians. He is also a frequent performer with Toronto's acclaimed the Art of Time Ensemble and Soundstreams, with which Stephen completed a tour in May 2012 to Taiwan and China, performing works by Tan Dun and R. Murray Schafer.

As an arranger, Stephen has arranged music for the Emperor Quartet (over 20 arrangements of show tunes and popular songs), Quartetto Gelato (*Octosca*) and the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony (Canadian and Italian national anthems).

Stephen was awarded the Queen's Jubilee Medal, a nomination submitted by the National Youth Orchestra, where he is a faculty member. Stephen is also on the faculty of Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Toronto's Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory of Music, and is a frequent mentor for Hamilton's National Academy Orchestra. He has taught at the Banff Centre for the Arts, was an instructor at the University of Manitoba, and has maintained an active private studio.

ZOSHA DI CASTRI

Lineage (2013)

Composer's note:

In *Lineage*, I was interested in exploring the idea of what is passed down. As a kid, I loved listening to my grandparents tell stories about "the-old-country" or of life in the village or on the farm. These tales were at once so real through their repetition, and yet at the same time were so foreign and removed from my own personal experience. Thinking of this, I hoped to create a piece in which certain elements are kept constant while others are continually altered, adopted, or are added on, creating an ever-evolving narrative.

In preparing for this piece, I also spent much time reflecting upon what it means to "Return" – to keep coming back to something (or someone) that serves as a grounding force. I was interested in the idea of a landmark or point of origin, which remains steadfast, yet also evolves subtly over time. The constant nature of this rootedness is what allows us to orient ourselves; it serves as a bearing when navigating the many branches of uncharted possibility. It is also the measuring stick by which we gauge how far we've come and how far we've yet to travel.

At the heart of the piece is a distant microtonal chorale played by the winds: two stark melodic

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lines form a closely-knit counterpoint, which sets up an intimate, almost haunting, atmosphere. Out of this sparseness, the orchestra disappears downward, forming an almost silent descent into the abyss from which several new textures and timbres are then born: a homorhythmic string passage characterized by a registral expansion and contraction, a whirring ostinato that brilliantly spins forth splitting into various streams, a more densely layered folk-inspired section, and finally an energetically charged cathartic release. This trajectory, however, is interspersed with reoccurrences of the initial chorale, which act as signposts throughout the work.

The resulting music is a combination of change and consistency, a re-imagining of places and traditions I've known only second-hand, the sound of a fictitious culture one dreams up to keep the memories of another generation alive.

THOMAS ADÈS *Dances from Powder Her Face* (2007)

Thomas Adès' 1995 chamber opera *Powder Her Face* was his

debut work for theatre. It recounts the fall-from-grace tale of Margaret, Duchess of Argyll, whose death in 1993, at the age of 80, had brought her back into the news. She was the center of a scandalous divorce trial in 1963 and became known as “the Dirty Duchess” in hypocritically titillating tabloid exposé pictures documenting her sexual adventurousness. Before her downfall, the Duchess had had it all. For the present suite of dances, a joint commission by the Aldeburgh festival, the Philharmonia Orchestra, and the Cleveland Orchestra, Adès reworked selections from his 1995 score, originally for a 15-piece band, for the full resources of a large orchestra. The result, which received its premiere in 2007, gives us a new angle on this music by clothing it in richer orchestra dress.

The Overture establishes the opera’s framework, which proceeds as a series of flashbacks to a bygone era’s decadent glitz as well as to the notorious trial. These are recalled from the Duchess’ degraded present state, living in a hotel from which she is eventually booted as unpaid bills accumulate. Adès takes a Nabokovian delight in the fluid, woozy possibilities of his allusive musical language, contrasting a surreally twisted foxtrot with the swooping mockery of clarinets. The Overture’s acerbically neon, spiky strains are followed by the Waltz, which is drawn from one of the scenes of

sustained flashback that recalls the expensive wedding of the philandering Duke and Duchess. An alcohol-fueled waitress imagines herself trading places to enjoy a life of luxury and sings an aria (“Fancy, fancy being rich”). The Waltz translates this music into hesitantly dancing, tipsy orchestral colourism. In the Finale, we return to the acerbic sonorities of the Overture, now rendered with even more caustic distortions. The Duchess is booted out of the hotel but maintains an oddly alluring sense of dignity as her last attempt at seduction fails, while imagined “servants” (hotel employees) have the final say to taunting, obscenely lurching tango rhythms.

OMAR DANIEL

***Sinfonia Concertante* (2015)**

Mehetapja Meeli Unistus
(*Meeli; the Husband Killer’s Dream*)

Composer’s note:

This work is dedicated to, and inspired by, Alex Pauk and the musicians of Esprit Orchestra.

My interest in Estonian folk idioms has inspired many of my works in recent years, and the myth/epic poem/Runo-song of the Husband Killer is of particular interest to me. On her wedding night Meeli, a young bride, apparently for no reason, murders her husband. The next day, she emerges from her bridal chamber and is confronted by the townsfolk. She runs into the forest and asks the

birch, poplar and elm trees, as well as the rocks and earth, for forgiveness. They turn her away. She then wanders into a bog and dies. The source text only relates the events of the narrative, and does not allude to the reasons for her actions. I have always been a little bit haunted by this: what was she thinking?

Once I embarked on composing the work, it became a type of concerto for orchestra. In a very basic way, Sinfonia Concertante follows the narrative of the myth. The violence of the opening, alluding to the wedding-night murder, is followed by Meeli's encounters with the natural world: her attempt to solicit forgiveness and find solace. Her relationship with the natural world takes the form of individual instruments or small instrumental groups engaging in a dialogue. Eventually, the bog accepts her, and her last thoughts are of childhood.

Excerpt:

*Meeli begged her knife,
"Oh, my dear knife,
Will you eat what I feed you?
Will you drink what I'll give you?
Will you drink the blood of the heart?
Will you eat the flesh of the liver?*

*Meeli killed her young husband,
Slew her new spouse.*

*After the deed was done, Meeli ran to
the forest.
The aspen and birch and stones
refused her.*

But the bog took her in:

*"Climb onto my back,
Step on my ridge,
Crawl into my waves."
Mommy, dear mommy
Why did you leave me to be blown by
the winds,
Why did you leave me to be beaten
by the rain?*

JÖRG WIDMANN **Con Brio (2008)**

Con brio, an homage to Beethoven, was performed for the first time by the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Mariss Jansons. It was at the world premiere of the piece that Jansons suggested that Jörg Widmann refers to musical characteristics of Beethoven's 7th and 8th Symphonies in his composition. His starting points primarily are specific fast types of movement in the Beethoven works which he translates into his tonal language. Widmann has chosen the same instrumentation as the Beethoven symphonies and takes on the task of causing a similar "stir and rhythmic pressure" (Widmann) with these economical means.

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Esprit's Sponsor-a-Player Program

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Operations Manager

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Photo by: Juan

ZOSHA DI CASTRI**(b. 1985)****Composer**

Zosha Di Castri is a Canadian composer/pianist living in New York. Her work

(which has been performed in Canada, the US, South America, and Europe) extends beyond purely concert music, including projects with electronics, sound arts, and collaborations with video and dance. Most recently, she was commissioned by the NACO to compose *Dear Life*, a large multi-media work for orchestra, soprano, and recorded narrator, based on a short story by Alice Munro. Her new music theatre work, *Phonobellow* (co-written with David Adamcyk) was also premiered by ICE in New York and Montreal in 2015.

Phonobellow features five musicians, a large-scale kinetic sound sculpture, electronics, and video in a reflection on the influence of photography and phonography on human perception.

Her orchestral compositions have been commissioned by the San Francisco Symphony, New World Symphony, and Esprit Orchestra, and have been featured by the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, Amazonas Philharmonic, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra among others. Zosha has made appearances with the Chicago Symphony and the L.A. Philharmonic in their chamber music series and has worked with many leading new

music groups including Talea Ensemble, Wet Ink, Ekmeles, the NEM, and JACK Quartet. She was the recipient of the Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music for her work *Cortège* in 2012, and participated in Ircam's Manifeste Festival, writing an interactive electronic work for Thomas Hauert's dance company, ZOO.

Upcoming projects include a solo miniature for violinist Jennifer Koh, a new string quartet for the Banff International String Quartet Competition, and a piece for violist Stephen Dann and his family.

Zosha completed a Bachelor of Music in piano performance and composition at McGill University, and has a doctorate from Columbia University in composition. She recently began a tenure-track appointment as an assistant professor of music at Columbia in the summer of 2014.

THOMAS ADÈS**(b. 1971)****Composer**

Thomas Adès was born in London in 1971. His compositions include two operas, *Powder Her Face* ((Cheltenham Festival/ Almeida Theatre, London, 1995), and *The Tempest* (Royal Opera, Covent Garden, 2004). Other orchestral works include *Asyla* (CBSO, 1997), *Tevot* (Berlin Philharmonic and Carnegie Hall, 2007), *Polaris* (New World Symphony, Miami 2011), *Violin Concerto Concentric Paths* (Berliner Festspiele and London Proms, 2005), *In Seven Days* (Piano concerto with moving

image – LA Philharmonic and RFH London 2008), and *Totentanz* for mezzo-soprano, baritone and orchestra (London Proms, 2013).

Chamber works include the string quartets *Arcadiana* (1993) and *The Four Quarters* (2011), *Piano Quintet* (2001), and *Lieux retrouvés* for cello and piano (2010). Solo piano works include *Darknesse Visible* (1992), *Traced Overhead* (1996), and *Three Mazurkas* (2010). Choral works include *The Fayrfax Carol* (King's College, Cambridge 1997), *America: a Prophecy* (New York Philharmonic, 1999) and *January Writ* (Temple Church, London 2000).

From 1999 to 2008 he was Artistic Director of the Aldeburgh Festival.

As a conductor, he appears regularly with, among others, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, London Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Concertgebouw, Melbourne and Sydney Symphonies, BBC Symphony, and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. As an opera conductor he has conducted *The Rake's Progress* at the Royal Opera, London and the Zürich Opera, and last Autumn made his debut at the Metropolitan Opera New York conducting *The Tempest*. He will conduct this production of *The Tempest* at the Vienna Staatsoper in 2015 with the Vienna Philharmonic.

Future plans include *Totentanz* with the Boston and Chicago

Symphonies and the Los Angeles and New York Philharmonics.

Recent piano engagements include solo recitals at Carnegie Hall (Stern Auditorium), New York and the Barbican in London, and concerto appearances with the New York Philharmonic.

Prizes include: Grawemeyer Award for *Asyla* (1999); Royal Philharmonic Society large-scale composition awards for *Asyla*, *The Tempest* and *Tevot*; Ernst von Siemens Composers' prize for *Arcadiana*; British Composer Award for *The Four Quarters*; and Best Opera Grammy and Diapason d'or de l'année (Paris) for *The Tempest*. He coaches Piano and Chamber Music annually at the International Musicians Seminar, Prussia Cove.

OMAR DANIEL

(b. 1960)

Composer

Omar Daniel has composed extensively in solo, chamber, electronic and orchestral idioms, and was the 1997 recipient of the Jules Lèger Award for New Chamber Music. Other composition awards include the 2007 K.M. Hunter Arts Award, the SOCAN National Competition for Young Composers and the CBC National Radio Competition for Young Composers. He holds the position of Associate Professor of Composition at Western University.

Daniel's recent compositional interests are preoccupied with the integration of ancient Estonian folk songs (*Regilaulud*) into his compositions. This has resulted in a number of important compositions: '*Metsa Maasikad*' (Wild Strawberries), '*Mehetapja*' (The Husband Killer), '*Üheksa Eesti Regilaulud*' (Eight Estonian Runo-songs), '*Violin Concerto*', and the Esprit Orchestra commission *Mehetapja Meeli Unistus* (*Meeli (the Husband Killer's) Dream*).

JÖRG WIDMANN

(b. 1973)

Composer

One of Germany's most sought-after composers and a virtuoso clarinetist, Jörg Widmann has performed with major orchestras around the world with conductors including Christoph von Dohnányi, Sylvain Cambreling, Peter Eötvös, Christoph Eschenbach, and Kent Nagano. Several carinet concertos have been dedicated to and premièred by him. Widmann's great passion as a clarinetist is chamber music and he regularly performs with partners such as Tabea Zimmermann, Heinz Holliger, András Schiff, Kim Kashkashian, and Hélène Grimaud.

His oeuvre includes a large number of chamber music works, scenic works such as his first full-length opera *Das Gesicht im Spiegel*, and large-scale orchestral works. Leading orchestras such as the Berliner Philharmoniker and Wiener

Philharmoniker have commissioned works from him. At Opéra Bastille, *Am Anfang* (part installation, part opera) by Anselm Kiefer and Jörg Widmann, was premièred in July 2009. He was composer-in-residence with the Deutsches Symphonie Orchester Berlin, 2004 Salzburg Festival, Essen and Cologne Philhamonies, Vienna Konzerthaus, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, and the Cleveland Orchestra. This season, Widmann continues his work as a conductor, taking up the post of Principal Guest Conductor of the Irish Chamber Orchestra for an initial period of five years.

ESPRIT extends a warm welcome to
the following groups at tonight's
concert

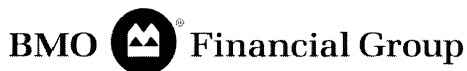
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SAT. OCT. 17, 2015 | TURNING POINT ENSEMBLE

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November 15, 2015

Play

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Thomas Adès – *Tevot***

John Rea – *Zefiro torna* (Zephyr Returns)

Alex Pauk – conductor

*Canadian Premiere

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Air to Breath**

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Alex Pauk – conductor

Bryan Cheng – cello

Robert Venables – trumpet

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March 31, 2016
**La création
du monde**

Darius Milhaud – *La création du monde*

**Hussein Janmohamed – *Nur: Reflections
on Light* for choir**

Douglas Schmidt – *Sirens**

Alex Pauk – *Soul and Psyche* for choir
and orchestra**

Alex Pauk – conductor

The Elmer Iseler Singers

Lydia Adams – guest conductor

*World Premiere – commissioned by Esprit with
generous support from The Koerner Foundation

**World Premiere – commissioned by The Koerner
Foundation through The Elmer Iseler Singers

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